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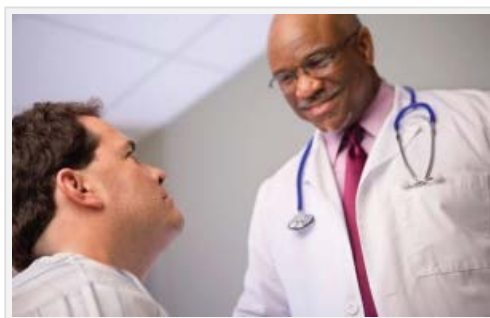
NAVY MEDICINE IN FOCUS

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center announces April webinars in support of Sexual Health Month

BY VJOHNSON – MARCH 27, 2014

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Story by Hugh Cox, Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center



The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) announced Mar. 26 that a series of webinars will be available in April in support of its Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP).

The webinars are part of a fleet wide effort to encourage Sailors, Marines, their families, clinicians and educators to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) – like HIV – and unintended pregnancies.

According to Mr. Michael R. (Bob) MacDonald, NMCPHC Public Health Educator, NMCPHC annually observes April as Sexual Health Month. “It’s an opportunity for every command and for health care professionals to help our people ‘chart a safe course’ with the free, easy-to-use materials in our April Health Promotion Toolbox,” said MacDonald.

Risky sexual behavior has serious consequences in the Navy and Marine Corps. Another active duty Sailor or Marine is diagnosed with HIV about every 4 days.^{1,2} In 2012, over 5,000 cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea or syphilis were diagnosed among active duty Sailors and Marines.³ In addition to STI’s, unplanned pregnancies are also an issue in the Navy and Marine Corps. In 2012, only one of three enlisted Navy women said her last pregnancy while in the Navy was planned.⁴ Of those who experienced an unplanned pregnancy, half said that they were not using any form of birth control when the pregnancy occurred. Among the women who were using

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contraception at the time of their unplanned pregnancy, about half were using birth control pills.⁴ In 2008, only half of unmarried, active duty men, and only one-third of women, in the Navy and Marine Corps reported using a condom the last time they had sex.

In observance of Sexual Health month in April, NMCPHC will host three webinars for health promoters and clinicians on promoting sexual health in the Department of the Navy.

1. April 2: Promoting Sexual Health
2. April 9: How I Ask My Patient About Sexual Health
3. April 16: Navy Medicine and Unplanned Pregnancy Prevention

For more information, or to register for a webinar visit the NMCPHC HPW webinar page: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/webinars.aspx>.

The vision of SHARP is a Department of the Navy (DoN) cultural norm in which physical and social sexual health are encouraged, supported and expected; and a DoN population in which all pregnancies are planned, and sexual violence, coercion and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are prevented.

To sign-up for NMCPHC's sexual health promotion newsletter, SHARPNews, click [here](#).

Practical tools, educational resources and prevention strategies, including best practices for preventing STIs and HIV, and family planning are available from SHARP at: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/reproductive-sexual-health/Pages/reproductive-and-sexual-health.aspx>, and from the Health Promotion Toolbox for April – Sexual Health month: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/hp-toolbox-april.aspx>.

SHARP is part of the NMCPHC's Health Promotion and Wellness (HPW) Campaign, which provides innovative and evidence-based health promotion and wellness programs and services that facilitate readiness and resilience, prevent illness and injury, hasten recovery and promote lifelong healthy behaviors and lifestyles. The HPW Campaign aligns with the 21st Century Sailor and Marine Initiative, a set of objectives and policies across a spectrum of wellness, that maximizes each Sailor's and Marine's personal readiness to hone the most effective combat force in the history of the DoN; as well as "Operation Live Well," a Defense Department campaign targeting service members, veterans and military operational leaders encouraging them to live healthy and active lifestyles.

NMCPHC is part of the Navy Medicine team, a global health care network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high-quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

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